

BATTLE OF DALE FARM

How the day's events unfolded

7.30am: A convoy of riot police vans arrived at Dale Farm

8.45am: Bailiffs started to knock down a wall built by travellers near the protesters' camp and were pelted with bottles and missiles

7.15am: Riot police holding shields advanced up and advanced towards the camp, as traveller women ran into their homes in tears

7.30am: Cops broke down a fence and were confronted by angry protesters throwing bricks at them. A protester allegedly threatening to attack two police officers was Thrown

7.45am: A caravan was torched and thick black smoke billowed across Dale Farm

8am: Police and protesters entered and set off near the makeshift barricade at the entrance to the site

8.05am: Three fire engines

arrived, but crews decided the blaze was under control and didn't tackle it

8.30am: Traveller Noreen Sayers suffered a back injury and paramedics rushed to her aid

9.05am: A second caravan was set alight, causing a loud explosion. Four people fell ill from smoke inhalation

10am: Several caravans were moved away from the protest barricade and onto a nearby site

10.15am: Protesters urinate on police trying to recover fermentable liquids from behind the barricade

10.30am: Police and bailiffs wearing climbing gear climbed onto the barricade and a tree to try to prevent protesters down

1.15pm: Five cops boarded a cherry picker and approached the watch tower at the top of the barricade to persuade protesters to get down

1.55pm: A man secured himself to a scaffolding pole on the barricade

1.57pm: A protester was taken down from the barricade by police in a cage

2.30pm: Travellers were

handcuffed by police and taken down from the scaffolding on a cherry picker

2pm: A protester was taken to hospital, suffering from a suspected seizure

4.40pm: The last of seven protesters were removed from the site

5.50pm: Protesters threw

grenades at police



Come on down - police start removing protesters from the scaffolding making up the raised gateway

62 extra pitches are still required by law

By JON AUSTIN
jaustin@bgn.co.uk

GARSDON may still have to provide 62 extra traveller pitches after spending up to £1million on the Dale Farm eviction, the Echo can reveal.

Council bosses have confirmed they will provide any more sites and move due to challenge the figure at the High Court until Communities Secretary Eric Pickles said he would scrap the targets when the coalition came to power.

However, Neil Coston, head of enforcement at Basildon Council, admitted at the eve of the eviction the targets were still in force and the council the council should have to provide them by the end of the year.

Mr Coston argued that even if

they already have 110 legal

pitches and feel other authorities need to make provision.

However, Mr Coston said: "The regional spatial strategy (pitch targets) is still part of the development plan and the weight that must be given to it is substantial.

It demands 62 pitches by the end of 2011.

The council should be prepared to identify suitable locations for the future plots.

He said a challenge to the High Court by a developer meant Mr Pickles had "scrupulously" scrapped the targets and they were still in place until new legislation goes through.

Tory leaders thought they could ignore the targets because of Mr Pickles' intention.

He said it would take about three to four years to complete before any sites were brought forward, so it would be no help to

the council.

Mr Coston argued that even if

they already have 110 legal

pitches and feel other authorities need to make provision.

However, Mr Coston said: "The regional spatial strategy (pitch targets) is still part of the development plan and the weight that must be given to it is substantial.

It demands 62 pitches by the end of 2011.

The council should be prepared to identify suitable locations for the future plots.

He said a challenge to the High

Court by a developer meant Mr

Pickles had "scrupulously" scrapped

the targets and they were still in

place until new legislation goes

through.

He said it would take about

three to four years to complete

before any sites were brought

forward, so it would be no help to

the council.

Cost is within £18million budget

THE cost of the eviction is within the £18million budget set aside for it, Basildon Council has said.

Although the authority can't predict the final cost at the moment, it isn't expected to spiral beyond the initial worst case scenario.

Police costs are budgeted at

£10million and the council-funded clearance is expected to cost up to £8million.

The council costs include

billions from Constant and Co,

who are costing £2.2million.

A further £1million is being

spent on temporary accommoda-

tion for staff involved in the oper-

ation and additional council

resources to support the opera-

tion come in at £300,000.

Ambulance services are costing

£200,000, fire service support is

£50,000 and £900,000 has been set

aside for operational contingency

- in case any extra costs arise.

Additional council resources to

support efforts after the eviction

are expected to cost £200,000 and

a temporary advice and liaison

centre set up is costing £100,000.

A further £1.5million is set

aside for costs arising after the

operation is completed.

The council will publish the full costs of

the eviction once it is complete.

BATTLE OF DALE FARM

Travellers' tactic to buy more time

COUNCIL bosses have admitted a tactic to move several caravans on to three "protected" pitches at Dale Farm could buy families extra time at the site.

The travellers moved as many caravans as possible on to three of the 11 plots available while the council can only remove the hard standing, but not any vehicles or caravans due to a technicality.

Bailiffs can remove the caravans temporarily to get to the hardcore, but admitted yesterday they will have to put them all back on the plots again.

A council spokesman said: "If there are a number of caravans on the pitches we can remove them. The hard standing will be removed and there will just be mud to put the caravans back on to."

"If they want us to move all the caravans back we will have to, but we are stressing to the families that it will not be very pleasant for them.

"They will have no solid base and there will be no access road left so it should be very unpleasant

only served for the hard standing. We could have served subsequent orders for the caravans, but the legal advice was it could lead to more challenges and challenges and slow up the process further, so I think we got it right."

"

The caravans cannot be removed because when the council served eviction notices on the site, it only addressed the hard standing, not the plots.

Lorraine Brown, chief selector

to the council, maintained it had acted correctly despite the apparent blunder.

She said: "There were no caravans on these plots when the notices were served so it was

transforming the land back into a green field is expected to take about six weeks.

The operation will continue after dark each night, but travellers will only be moved off the site during daylight hours.

Tony Ball, council leader, said he wasn't in a position to give a date when the clearance would be completed.



Day's end - the scaffolding tower is floodlit after a day of clashes

Picture: LUAN MARSHALL BA5096

BA1584352 [v1].JPG

16 cm x 9

Hobbycraft